

Chapter No. 2265

16/SS01/R1243

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***SENATE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 687***

Originated in Senate

Liz Welch

Secretary

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 687

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION JOINING THE CITY OF NATCHEZ IN
CELEBRATING THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF NATCHEZ CHILDREN'S SERVICES.

WHEREAS, Natchez Children's Services is the oldest nonprofit organization in Mississippi and among the oldest continuously operated, child-focused organizations in the United States; and

WHEREAS, on March 12, 2016, Natchez Children's Services celebrated the 200th Anniversary of its founding with a program at the First Presbyterian Church and an open house at "the Home"; and

WHEREAS, Natchez Children's Services was founded in 1816, a time of agrarian, economic and political crisis in the Mississippi Territory. The War of 1812 and its associated Indian battles had ended the year before, leaving many widows and orphans. Early in 1816 a group of Natchez women, recognizing a great need among the less privileged children of the district, began soliciting funds for the establishment of a "charity school." They had soon raised \$1,200.00 and, on March 12th, called a meeting at the home of Mrs. Samuel Davis for the purpose of organizing an association to sponsor the school. Reverend Benjamin Davis was employed to teach

the children of the charity school. Members of the association, called the "Female Charitable Society," were all subscribers to the fund. Over the years, descendants of some of these founders have often served on the organization's Board of Directors; and

WHEREAS, early in the Society's life, the need for a home for the children of the charity school was identified. The yellow fever epidemics of 1817, 1818 and 1819 swelled the number of orphans. Those without family to take them in had been boarded with various families in town and sent to the charity school. The orphanage was finally established in 1821. Samuel and Ann Postlethwaite had donated property at the northeast corner of Pine (now Martin Luther King) and Homochitto Streets. The Society had purchased the home of Judge John B. Taylor, moved it to the property and made extensive renovations. In 1822, the Society purchased five acres of the Arlington property and contracted for the construction of a four-thousand-square-foot, wood-frame home. In 1825, the Female Charitable Society became the Natchez Orphan Asylum. In 1856, the organization purchased the North Union Street home of the then-late Samuel and Ann Postlethwaite. That building continued to house the orphanage until construction of the current structure on the same property in 1951. The Natchez Orphan Asylum became popularly known as the Protestant Asylum, and later as the Protestant Home, to distinguish the institution from the Roman Catholic orphanages: D'Evereux Hall Orphan Asylum for Boys opened in 1860 and the older St. Mary's Orphan Asylum for

Girls. Despite its name, the Natchez Protestant Home was not sectarian. Its board was drawn from area churches: the Jewish Synagogue, the Christian Science congregation and interested citizens. The name was changed to Natchez Children's Home in the mid-1980s to better reflect its nonsectarian nature; and

WHEREAS, the necessity for services for neglected, displaced, and at-risk youngsters is as great today as it was in 1816, despite the absence of Indian wars and yellow fever. As community needs have evolved over the last two centuries, the Female Charitable Society has evolved to meet those needs. The Protestant Home continued to provide shelter and care for children at risk, even as true orphans became rare but children from dysfunctional or poor families became all too common; and

WHEREAS, Social Service Programs, such as family counseling and behavioral therapy, were introduced in the latter part of the Twentieth Century. The name was changed to Natchez Children's Home Services in 2005 to emphasize the organization's mission to provide more than housing. The organization began to reach into the homes and families of the children it served. It began dealing with issues unimaginable to earlier generations; and

WHEREAS, when public support for residential institutions was withdrawn, Natchez Children's Home Services refused to abandon its children. It explicitly adopted an "outpatient" model, which enables it to improve the lives of many more children than conceivable for a residence. The Children's Advocacy Center,

Children's Behavioral Health Center, therapeutic day treatment and other programs are the result. Now, as the Female Charitable Society celebrates its 200th Anniversary, it has a new name: Natchez Children's Services. This name fits the current "outpatient" model since the NCS facility no longer provides residential care. Plenty of children still go daily to the NCS building on North Union Street. The classrooms are busy. The lunchroom is noisy. The offices and therapy centers provide solutions suited for the Twenty-First Century; and

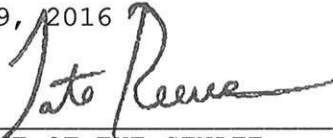
WHEREAS, despite all the changes over the past two centuries, the words of the 1823 Annual Report remain apt: The managers have little to regret but their inability to do more in the cause of humanity, while they have abundant reason to be thankful to Providence that they have been enabled to do so much. Natchez Children's Services continues to save lives, one child at a time:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby join the City of Natchez in celebrating the 200th Anniversary of Natchez Children's Services, and extend our best wishes to this outstanding organization on this auspicious landmark event.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to the Director of Natchez Children's Services, forwarded to the

Natchez Board of Aldermen and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
April 19, 2016



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
April 20, 2016



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES